



UK Land Power



Joint Doctrine Publication (JDP) 0-20, *UK Land Power* is the UK's keystone land doctrine. Whilst JDP 0-01, *UK Defence Doctrine* provides the broad principles and philosophy underpinning the use of UK Armed Forces, JDP 0-20 is focused specifically on UK land power.

The land is where people live and compete, where most wars are fought and decided, and where peace is usually concluded. The land is therefore an important domain of military operations alongside maritime, air and the more recently recognised operational domains of space, and cyber and electromagnetic.

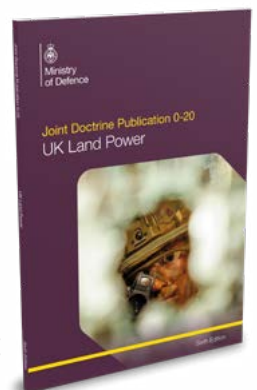
Land power is defined as: **the ability of land forces to exert decisive control and influence on actors and the course of events.** At the heart of UK land power is the capacity of UK land forces to fight and win in combat on land, as part of an integrated force.

Land power encompasses the employment of UK land forces – in conjunction with the other Services and multi-agency, multinational and private sector partners – to achieve a broad range of political objectives. In a domain defined by complexity and uncertainty, our land forces are capable of exerting land power for strategic effect across a range of tasks, whether deterring adversaries, defeating our enemies, building partnerships or improving stability.

The successful employment of UK land power is predicated upon sound strategic thinking by Defence. A flexible and agile approach to strategy and warfare allows the development of a campaign plan based on achievable objectives, which can respond to unexpected events and crises. This approach, which focuses on restricting our opponent's courses of action, whilst preserving our freedom of action, underpins the effective employment of land power.

The land environment is inherently complex and is shaped primarily by physical, human and information characteristics. It is in the land environment that the roots of conflict are usually found, since conflict on land involves those things that people tend to value most: their lives, values, property, resources and systems of governance.

The enduring attributes of land forces – soldiers, presence, persistence and adaptability – are shaped by the distinct characteristics of the land environment, as well as the enduring nature of war. These attributes create advantages and opportunities which enable the broad utility of land power; they also present challenges that must be understood for land forces to be used effectively.



- a. The primary attribute of any land force is its **soldiers**. Land forces rely on human initiative, enterprise and intelligence.
- b. The **presence** of land forces on the ground means that they operate near people and terrain, enabling them to physically defend or secure objectives.
- c. The attribute of **persistence** – the capacity of land forces to extend their presence and endure in an area for long periods of time – gives land forces the potential to broaden and deepen their understanding of the local environment.
- d. **Adaptability** underpins the ability of a land force to perform many functions; it lies at the heart of land power’s broad strategic utility. Adaptability demands that land forces embrace the need to learn quickly and to change plans accordingly.

The way land forces operate is guided by the three tenets of land doctrine: the manoeuvrist approach, combined arms approach and mission command.

UK and NATO doctrine describe international relations in the current challenging era as a continuum of competition ranging from cooperation to armed conflict; land forces can be employed across the whole of that continuum. There are six land operational themes describing the employment of land forces:

- conventional warfare;
- irregular warfare;
- stability and peace support operations;
- engagement;
- humanitarian assistance and disaster relief; and
- homeland resilience.

UK national policy mandates an integrated approach to national power. The integrated approach, known as the comprehensive approach in NATO, formalises the requirement for government departments to coordinate their responses to national policy challenges.

Multi-domain integration is the force development philosophy that informs the way land forces fight and operate. In support of this philosophy, land forces use the term convergence to describe how effects are created in support of the joint force from a broad range of capabilities – tactical to operational.

Want to read more about UK land power?

The full edition of JDP 0-20 is designed to be a simple and concise explanation of UK land power, written at the OFFICIAL classification to access the widest possible audience. JDP 0-20 should be of value to joint commanders and staffs, single-Service warfare branches, other government departments, partners and allies.



Find out more about joint operational-level doctrine and the other work of the Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre at the links below.

[gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)

[defnet](https://www.defnet.gov.uk)

[Defence Gateway](#)

